

Every Other Week Garbage Pickups for Households



Seattle
Public
Utilities

Seattle Considers Every-Other Week (EOW) Garbage

Pros

- Saves up to \$5-6M per year
- Reduces truck impacts, traffic and emissions
- Encourages recycling and composting
- Implemented in other regional cities

Cons

- Potential for customer opposition and unintended consequences
- Higher rates for some
- Moderate overall savings may not justify perceived service drop

Why do we seek your input now?

The Mayor and Council need to decide by early 1Q 2014, so that we can notify the contractors by 4/1/14 –if we want to implement in April of 2015. Missing this deadline would push off the next earliest implementation date to 4/1/16.

2012 Pilot Background

Council directed SPU to complete pilot to understand potential impacts

- Feedback from Seattle customers
- Impacts on different neighborhoods
- Recycling and composting benefits
- Reactions to different rate options
- Operational issues

Potential Citywide Context

**Citywide service could be as early as
2015 (if chosen)**

- Pilot results in June 2013 report
- Solid Waste Advisory Committee reviewed in September and recommended implementation
- Customer Panel review in November 2013
- Mayor and Council decision by February 2014
- Notify contractors March 2014
- Possible citywide implementation April 2015

Pilot Overview

One Less Truck: July 1 to Dec. 31, 2012

- Four contiguous pilot routes
- 200 single-family houses in each route - 800 total
- Mandatory participation, with stipend
- Two customer rates tested (average 11% price break)
- Recycling, yard waste stayed the same
- Utilized Race and Social Justice focus

Pilot Project Findings

Two groups of findings, that inform:

- Whether to go Citywide: **customer satisfaction, neighborhood impacts, recycling potential**
- How to implement if desired: **rate options, customer outreach, operations and transition impacts**
- **Focusing on first set of findings**

Whether to Implement: Pilot Customer Satisfaction

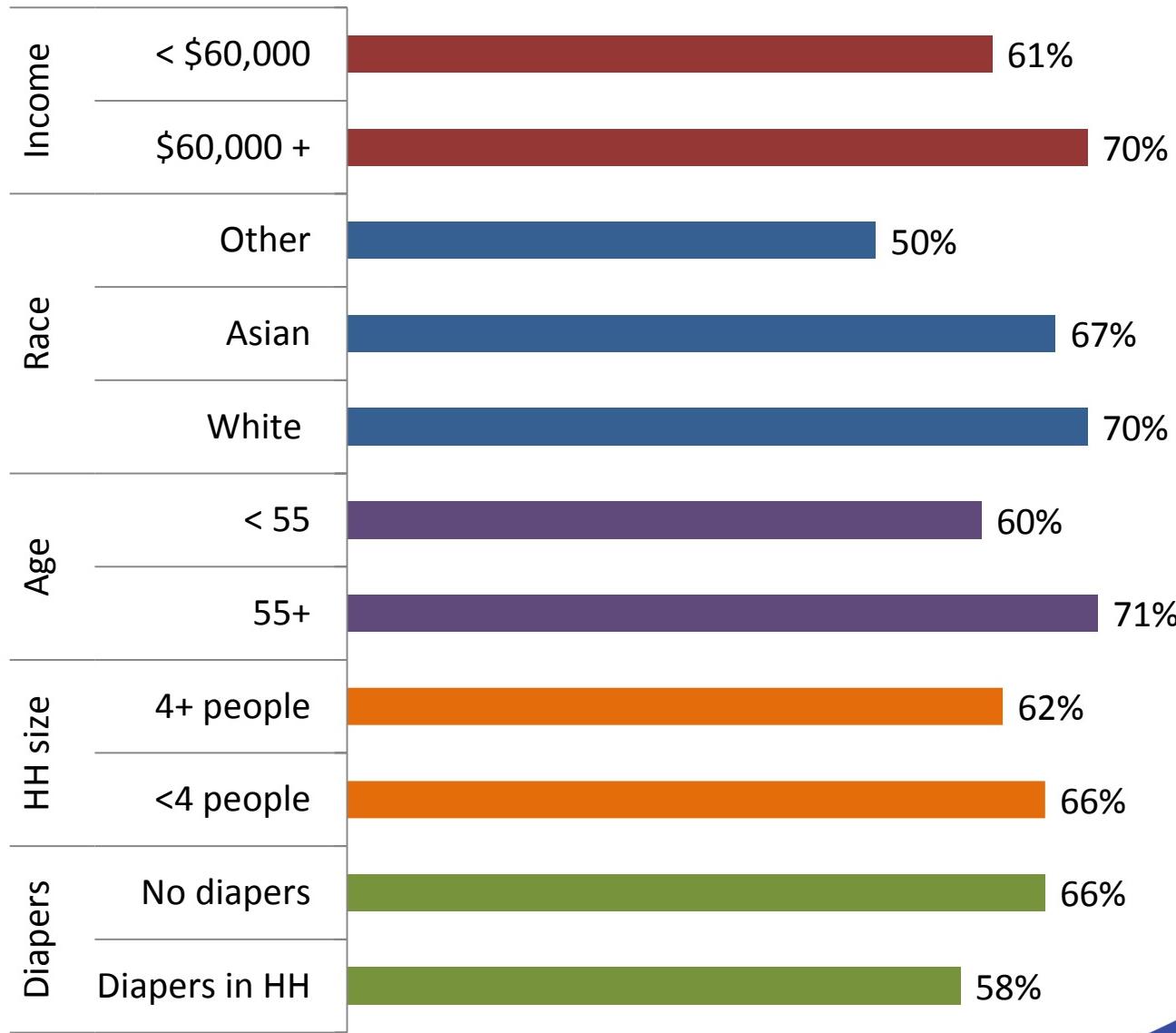
- 63% satisfied (a 5+ rating on 1-7 scale)
- Higher than 33% satisfaction in 2011 citywide survey
- Satisfaction higher for participants after pilot than in early stages
- Still much lower than with weekly service (89%)
- Recycling/yard waste satisfaction stayed high (89%)

Satisfaction by Key Demographics

Higher satisfaction reported by:

- **Whites and Asians**
- **Higher income**
- **Older and smaller households**
- **No diaper usage**

Satisfaction Chart



Reasons for Satisfaction with Pilot

Of those satisfied:

- 89% liked improving efficiencies and cutting costs.
- 80% liked the \$100 payment for participating.
- 73% did not experience rats or other pests.
- 73% felt there was less truck pollution in the neighborhood.
- 71% did not experience smells or odors.
- 65% said there were fewer trucks on the road.
- 60% said they were saving money on their bill.
- 55% reported their current garbage can worked well.

Reasons for Dissatisfaction

Of those not satisfied:

- 76% did not like having garbage on their property for that long.
- 72% felt the change increased smells and odors.
- 66% had to work harder to get garbage to fit in the can.
- 62% reported an increase in rodents and pests.
- 62% didn't like having to wait two weeks to have their garbage collected if they missed a collection.

Participants Recommendation for citywide change

- 53% pilot respondents recommended citywide implementation (80% of satisfied participants recommended)**
- 33% opposed citywide (88% dissatisfied recommended against citywide)**
- Demographic responses aligned with satisfaction feedback**

Whether to Implement: Diversion Potential

- Pilot households reduced garbage by 15% more than citywide households
- Recycling increased. Food composting diversion was difficult to measure.
- 30% survey respondents reported more food composting and 20% reported more recycling.
- Estimated potential to reduce garbage disposal 9,000 tons per year – and add 1.3% points to city recycling rate.

Whether to Implement: Other Environmental Benefits

- Approximate 25% reduction in solid waste truck traffic in local neighborhoods
- Approximate 15% reduction in solid waste truck emissions, with regional and global benefits

Whether to Implement: Pilot Neighborhood Impacts

Neutral Impact:

39% said they did not notice any difference in their neighborhood

Positive Impacts:

34% noticed less truck traffic

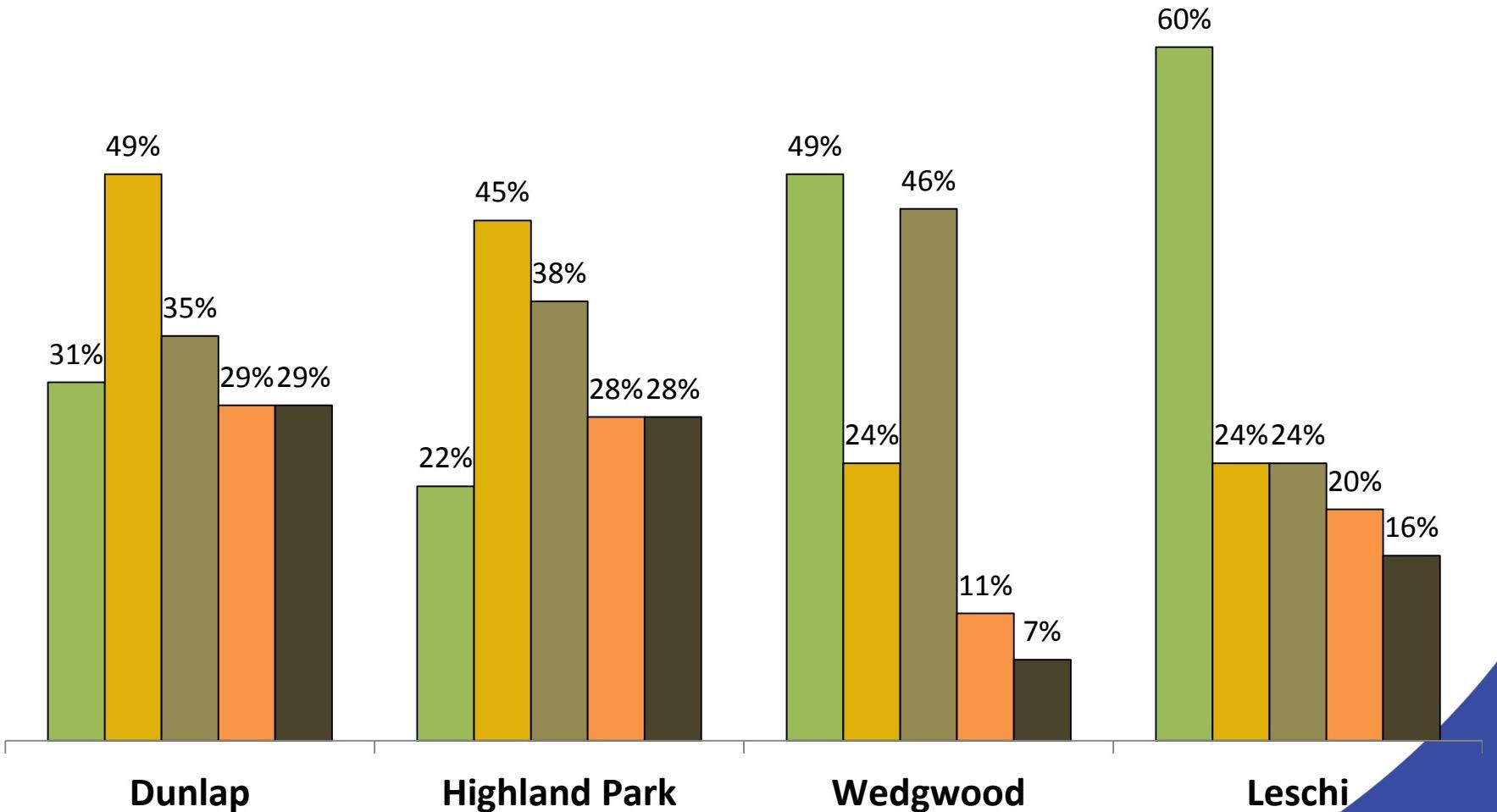
Negative Impacts

36% said there were more overflowing garbage and recycling containers

20% said their neighborhood look messier

Differences in Neighborhoods

■ None ■ Overflow ■ Fewer trucks ■ Cans at Curb ■ Messier



Whether to Implement: Financial Impacts

Solid waste fund impacts:

- Overall savings up to \$5-6M per year
- 3% saving on all customer revenue OR
- 6% saving on household customer revenue

Household customer impacts:

- “Can upsizers” (10-30%) likely to pay more
- “Can keepers” (70-90%) likely to have moderate savings

How to Implement: Potential Transition Measures

- Participants identified potential improvements for citywide service, such as free extra garbage or pickups, weekly recycling, diaper pickup, and new containers.
- All these measures could ease a transition, but could also reduce truck benefits, cut into potential savings or eliminate customer bill discounts.

Key Policy Considerations

- 1. Is projected customer satisfaction high enough?**
- 2. Can projected lower satisfaction for key demographics and potential neighborhood impacts be addressed?**
- 3. Is this the best program to boost composting and recycling?**
- 4. What level of transition measures are reasonable or affordable?**

SWAC Recommendation

- **Implement Citywide for residential households in April 2015**
- **Address potential lower satisfaction with impacted neighborhoods or populations**
- **Mitigate impacts of overflowing containers, household costs, and potential neighborhood dumping**

SPB Customer Panel Responses